

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-11 SCCT-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00

USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SSO-00 NSCE-00

INRE-00 ACDA-05 /077 W

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7571

INFO USMISSION USUN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, UNSC, SO, FR

SUBJECT: DJIBOUTI-SOMALI FRONTIER INCIDENT

REF: (A) PARIS 3530, (B) PARIS 3567, (C) USUN 427

1. DCM DISCUSSED CURRENT DJIBOUTI-SOMALI SITUATION WITH QUAI POLITICAL DIRECTOR DE LABOULAYE EVENING FEBRUARY 5. DE LABOULAYE SAID THAT THE QUAI WAS IN FREQUENT TELEPHONE CONTACT WITH FRENCH AMBASSADOR AT UN ON THIS SUBJECT. CONFIRMING INFORMATION IN REFS B AND C, QUAI HAS TOLD AMBASSADOR NOT TO PRESS ISSUE IN UNSC FOR PRESENT. HE HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED, HOWEVER, TO REACT IF SOMALIS RAISE ISSUE. GOF DOES NOT WANT TO WITHDRAW ITS COMPLAINT AT THE PRESENT TIME IF THERE IS A CHANCE THAT SOMALIS MIGHT THEN TABLE THEIR OWN PROTEST AND TAKE INITIATIVE IN UNSC.

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2. IN DESCRIBING FRENCH MILITARY ACTIONS THAT SECURED

RELEASE OF HOSTAGES FEBRUARY 4, DE LABOULAYE SAID THAT ORIGINAL FOUR TERRORISTS WHO SEIZED BUS CONTAINING FRENCH CHILDREN WERE REINFORCED -- PROBABLY DURING THE NIGHT -- BY TWO ADDITIONAL TERRORISTS. WHEN FRENCH SHARP-SHOOTERS KILLED FIVE TERRORISTS IN SHORT ACTION, SIXTH TERRORIST HAD TIME TO EXCHANGE FIRE WITH FRENCH TROOPS WHICH RESULTED IN DEATH OF ONE CHILD AND WOUNDING OF SEVERAL OTHERS IN BUS. IMMEDIATELY AFTER THIS EXCHANGE, FRENCH REP WALKED TO FRONTIER TO SIGNAL TO SOMALIS -- WHO WERE POSITIONED JUST OVER FRONTIER ON THEIR SIDE -- THAT FIRE FIGHT WAS OVER AND HAD NOT BEEN DIRECTED AT THEM. BEFORE HE COULD DELIVER HIS MESSAGE, HOWEVER, SOMALIS OPENED UP AND WERE "NEUTRALIZED" BY FRENCH COUNTER-FIRE.

3. GOF HAS LEARNED THAT TERRORISTS WHO HAD REMOVED ONE FRENCH CHILD FROM SCHOOL BUS AT BORDER HAVE NOW ASKED THAT SOMALI HOSPITAL TAKE CARE OF CHILD, WHO APPARENTLY WAS WOUNDED.

4. DE LABOULAYE EXPRESSED DISTRESS AND SURPRISE THAT SOMALI GOVERNMENT NOT ONLY DID NOT DENOUNCE THE ACTIONS OF THE TERRORISTS; IT SOUGHT TO JUSTIFY THEIR ACTIONS.

5. DE LABOULAYE ALSO CONFIRMED THAT FRENCH HAVE SENT MILITARY REINFORCEMENTS TO DJIBOUTI. ALTHOUGH HE SAID THAT HE DID NOT KNOW EXACT SIZE OF REINFORCEMENTS, PARIS PRESS REPORT THAT 800 TROOPS HAVE BEEN SENT TO DJIBOUTI IS PROBABLY EXAGGERATED. FRENCH MILITARY SOURCES TELL DEFATT THAT ABOUT 200 GENDARMES HAVE BEEN FLOWN COMMERCIALY. DE LABOULAYE STRESSED FRENCH DO NOT WANT MILITARY CONFRONTATION WITH SOMALIS. FRENCH ARE QUITE CONFIDENT, HOWEVER, THAT TWO FOREIGN LEGION BATTALIONS STATIONED IN DJIBOUTI -- AUGMENTED BY REINFORCEMENTS FROM MAINLAND FRANCE -- WILL BE ABLE TO HANDLE ANY CONFLICT THAT MIGHT BREAK OUT WITH SOMALIS OVER FRONTIER INCIDENT.
RUSH

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